

LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of International Labour

Editor : R. Palme Dutt



LABOUR AND REARMAMENT

S. O. DAVIES, M.P.

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BIRTHDAY AHEAD

OUR May Day issue with its magnificent cover (still at 1s.) was welcomed enthusiastically everywhere. 'On this great day of Labour celebration', one reader wrote, 'it would be hard to find a finer magazine, with this high standard of truthful evaluation'. The July Birthday number celebrating the completion of our first 30 years of publication will have a 4-page illustrated cover especially designed by the same artist. It will be enlarged to 64 pages—yet without any increase in price. Because part of it must be printed earlier we must decide the total in less than a week from today, June 1. That is why we ask; order immediately from your newsagent, bookshop, book-stall or literature secretary. Subscribers who will of course be getting theirs by post on the morning of publication date (Saturday, June 30) should write *now* if they want a second copy. What will be in the July Birthday number? Well, I can't tell you the secrets of the Editor's Notes of the Month; but since he has the span of 30 vitally important years to cover—a whole generation has grown up in the Labour movement with *Labour Monthly*—I haven't a doubt that we are in for something special. As for the articles, the feast begins with a survey of these years and the history of *Labour Monthly* told by Harry Pollitt in his most stirring style. There will be an authoritative survey of the Right to Strike and the law about it up to Order 1305, from one of the ablest writers on the subject; no hall in Britain could hold the audience of industrial workers of every kind to hear D. N. Pritt, K.C., explain so clearly and wittily this tremendous subject. Readers have been inquisitive about my reference last month to unpublished letters from 'one of the greatest nineteenth century Englishmen', beginning in July. It is William Morris, giving his views on Parliament and what real Socialists would aim to achieve through it. These will be introduced by an authority on Morris, R. Page Arnot, whose *Vindication* twenty years ago, defended Morris from the Philistines who tried to rob his work of its revolutionary content. (See page 285 for details.)

I think readers will agree that the new pamphlet in the 30 Years' Series, No. 5, *New Light on Korea*, by D. N. Pritt, K.C., is another winner. We have had congratulations, too, on the whole series. (New readers, see back cover for details.)

THE PRICE OF REARMAMENT

Last month, writing before the national press announced their 50 per cent. increase, I mentioned that the paper on which we print cost 81 per cent. more when recent supplies were delivered than a year ago—as though 20 cigarettes now cost you 6s. 4d. We are looking into all ways to avoid putting up the price. For example, we shall budget even more carefully; but above all, we shall show what steps readers themselves can take to keep the price within bounds. First, if readers will push up circulation, so as to produce an immediate increase in sales, it would help reduce the burden of fixed overheads. Next, we have something which other periodicals, with their

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Notes of the Month

What Programme for Labour?

A reduction of the armaments and the armed forces of the Four Powers would put an end to the armaments drive and to the growth of military budgets that fall as a heavy burden on the shoulders of the broad strata of the population.

(A. A. GROMYKO, speech at the Paris Four Powers Deputies' Conference, May 10, 1951.)

'THE beginning of health', wrote Cervantes, 'is to know the disease'. A wide discussion is developing through all Labour and trade union organisations and among Labour supporters on programme and policy. But the premisses of the discussions are not yet clear. The British patient is beginning to toss uneasily on the bed of thorns provided by Messrs. Gaitskell and Marshall, Morrison and Eisenhower. There is universal unrest over the staggering rise of prices which is hitting every home and making a mockery of hard won social gains and wage increases. There is deep disappointment

over the social retreat of the Rearmament Budget. There is alarm over Britain's deteriorating economic situation, the American stranglehold on raw materials, the impact on civilian industry and closing down of works, and the collapse of the previous year's precarious economic balance, with an adverse balance of trade soaring to an annual rate of close on £1,000 million. There is anxiety over the still extending Tory offensive which in the local elections has been able to wrest from Labour such industrial strongholds as Leeds and Bradford, Preston and Carlisle. The ferment and stirring among the ranks of Labour supporters has begun to reach also to the upper levels of leadership. The first cracks in the previously solid front of the upper reformist leadership have begun to appear with the resignation of two Cabinet Ministers and another Minister over the Rearmament Budget. These cracks are a sign, not yet of an alternative leadership or policy, but of the bankruptcy and crisis of the existing official policy. Despite all attempts to putty over the cracks and stifle controversy, the battle of policy is forcing itself to the forefront. But the slogans of battle are still being sounded against the symptoms of the disease. The battle has still to be joined against the disease.

Price of Rearmament

Last month we analysed in detail the contrast between Britain's Rearmament Budget and the new 1951 Budgets of the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies. On the basis of abundant concrete evidence we reached the conclusion:

In the countries of socialism and socialist construction the social and economic needs of the people still take precedence of arms, despite the open and unconcealed threat from the West; and relatively low and restricted arms expenditure is accompanied by rising living standards.

In Britain and Eisenhower's Europe arms take precedence of social needs; and colossal rearmament programmes are accompanied by falling living standards.

The facts are indisputable. They are hard demonstrable facts. Yet it is precisely this truth which is concealed from the people, not only in every official utterance, in every Government speech, in every Tory howl for war, in every newspaper and radio monotony of sermonising to sacrifice for arms and still more arms, but also in nine tenths of the current controversy between Right and Left trends in Labour Party circles. Therefore the full battle has still to be joined. For it is precisely in this contrast that is expressed the heart of the

problem, not only of the present international situation, but of Britain's situation.

The Big Lie

Every protest against the social and economic hardships imposed on the people in the name of rearmament, however justified the protest, and however salutary the expression of mass militancy, is countered and stifled and blocked by the official Big Lie—so long as the Big Lie is accepted. Government Ministers proclaim that with bleeding hearts they are compelled to impose cuts and hardships and sacrifices upon the people, lower consumption and lower standards (and Mr. Gaitskell adds that if the American-imposed raw materials crisis should lead to further shortage, such shortage will be at the expense of civilian consumption in preference to the arms programme), not because they wish to embark on this reversal of all their promises, but because they are unexpectedly and regretfully driven to it by the 'menace of Soviet imperialism', the 'massive Soviet armaments', the 'Soviet refusal to disarm', the 'Soviet rulers' veto on all efforts for world peace' (National Council of Labour May Day Manifesto), and all the rest of the familiar gramophone record. This is the Big Lie. Unless the Big Lie is fought and smashed, the battle against the social and economic consequences of rearmament is outflanked before it is launched.

Facing the Truth

For it is a Big Lie—and everyone with the slightest knowledge of the facts of the international situation knows it is a big lie. The monstrous assertions of Government Ministers are made without a shred of evidence and without an attempt to present a shred of evidence. Mr. Shinwell may multiply the number of Soviet divisions in his head and come out with a new enlarged number every morning (words are cheap)—in face of the explicit statement of the United States Ambassador in Moscow that there is not the slightest sign of any additional call-up, call-up of reserves, transfer from civilian to arms production, or other evidence of war preparation. But Messrs. Attlee, Morrison and Shinwell cannot deny the plain fact that in the past twelve months American arms expenditure has increased from 17 to 49 billion dollars, or 190 per cent., British from £780 million to £1,490 million, or 91 per cent., and Soviet from 82.9 billion roubles to 96.4 billion, or 16 per cent. They cannot deny that, according to the Chairman of the Atlantic Council of Deputies, the arms expenditure of the Atlantic War Bloc has nearly

trebled in the past twelve months, from £7,500 million to £20,000 million, whereas the proportion of the Soviet Budget devoted to arms has only increased from 20 per cent. to 21 per cent., or below the pre-war level. They cannot deny that in the Soviet Union the social services receive more than one quarter above the amount going to arms expenditure, whereas in Britain the social services (excluding the food subsidies, whose effect is cancelled out by rising food prices) receive threequarters the amount of what goes to arms expenditure. They cannot deny that prices are falling in the Soviet Union and People's Democracies, and civilian consumption is rising, and that prices are rising in Britain and Marshall Europe, and civilian consumption falling. They cannot deny that the Soviet Union is consistently pressing for the all-round reduction of armaments, and that the whole fight of the Western Powers at Paris has been directed to resisting this demand. But once these truths are recognised, the whole case for the rearmament programme is exploded into thin air. The ground is cleared for a positive programme of the Left to rally the support of a united Labour movement.

Protest and Policy

It is not enough to protest against the ruinous social and economic consequences of the rearmament programme, so long as the rearmament programme itself is accepted. The daily mounting social and economic hardships imposed on the people are the symptoms of the disease. They are not the disease. We shall perform a labour of Sisyphus if we seek to conduct a fight solely against the symptoms, and do not fight at the same time and above all against the disease. The disease is the rearmament and war policy, which has placed Britain in the American war camp instead of alongside the nations fighting for peace; and which in the service of these criminal aims has squandered the resources and manpower of Britain for overseas predatory wars, disorganised Britain's economy, surrendered the economic and political life of Britain to American domination, made Britain a pawn for a third world war, and stultified the progressive social aims of the working class movement. Here is the ground of fight. Here is the enemy.

A Constructive Alternative

All the widespread, genuine and spontaneous protests against the social and economic consequences of the rearmament programme, which are finding expression in all sections of the working class movement, and which are also finding a partial reflection in the

Parliamentary Labour Party and in the present divisions on the Trades Union Congress General Council over wages and economic policy, can only become finally effective when they are linked to a positive alternative policy. Negative protest alone is no substitute for a policy. Resistance to the social and economic consequences of rearmament is only the first step in the fight. Its final outcome would be doomed to sterility unless the political fight is faced. It is necessary to present a constructive alternative policy which shows how Britain can lead the way for peace and for an all-round reduction of armaments; how Britain's independence of trading and of economic and political life can be restored; how the black record of colonial wars and repression can be ended and give place to new relations and voluntary association and co-operation based on national independence and equal rights; how the political deadlock can be overcome and Toryism defeated by a united labour movement leading the majority of the people; and how in this way the initial impetus and advance of 1945, which has been stultified and frustrated by subsequent policies, can be resumed and carried forward to real social change, to socialist nationalisation and the construction of socialism. Only such a programme could unite the at present dispersed sections of the Left, rally the majority of the Labour organisations and the people, and thus save the future of the working class movement, of Britain and of socialism.

'The British Road to Socialism'

Is there such a programme in the field? It is as a contribution towards such a longer term programme for the whole labour movement that the Communist Party has put forward its document, 'The British Road to Socialism', which was published in February of this year and has received wide circulation and discussion. 'The British Road to Socialism' is no ready-made blueprint; but it is a serious presentation of a positive policy, at once fundamental and concrete, to meet the new problems of Britain in the modern world situation, taking into account the experience of the years since 1945, and drawn up in relation to the distinctive national conditions and democratic traditions of British political development and the British labour movement.

Controversy and Silence

During the three and a half months since its publication two facts of interest may be noted. The first is that it has received a wider sale, reaching to some two hundred thousand copies, than any

comparable political document since the war, thus showing that it has won the attention and interest of far wider circles than those already accepting the Communist outlook. The second is that, despite this wide circulation and discussion in the organised working class movement, it has been up to the present received with a remarkable degree of silence—one might almost say, a complimentary degree of silence—in the official Labour journals and comment, notably the *Daily Herald*, which dismissed it in sixteen lines. This is not to say that official Labour propaganda is unconcerned with Communist policy. On the contrary. If official Labour propaganda devoted one-tenth the amount of vigour to really attacking Tory policy (not shadow-boxing) which it devotes to attacking Communist policy, there would be a remarkable change in the political atmosphere. But official Labour propaganda prefers to take pot-shots at the Aunt Sally of the conventional caricature of Communism, in stale diatribes drawn from the gutter of Tory anti-socialist filth, rather than attempt to discuss seriously the constructive policy which the Communist Party actually puts forward. The real problems, however, will not be so easily dismissed. For they spring from the concrete situation and will have to be faced, sooner or later, by the entire labour movement.

Scottish Trades Union Congress

It is, accordingly, important to assess the present stage of discussion and political development in the labour movement, in response to the critical questions and tests now arising, not merely from the expressions of the upper leadership, who have reached such a remarkable degree of assimilation with their capitalist colleagues, and whose stereotyped utterances receive magnified multiplication in the millionaire press and on the wireless but, above all, from below, from delegate conferences, and from the expressions of the living movement. Consider, for example, the outcome of the very interesting proceedings of the Scottish Trades Union Congress at Easter. The expression of the representatives of the organised working class in Scotland has always a certain indicative significance; since decades of experience have shown the development of the movement in Scotland to be as a rule a stage in advance of the movement over the country as a whole; Scotland reached a parliamentary labour majority long before England. Congress revealed a marked advance to the left. Resolutions were carried against the platform on a number of important questions. These

included opposition to the Budget; the demand for restoration of the social services cuts; support for all Union wage demands; rejection of 1305; and a call for less reliance upon America. A series of defeats were registered for the right wing.

The General Council were defeated on one issue after another in what must have been their bleakest Congress for many years. There can have been few occasions in the past when the General Council on a major issue of policy such as the Budget, could muster only a score of votes in addition to their own. (*Forward*, May 5, 1951.)

The Great Contradiction

But—and it is a very big but—the victories of the left were won primarily on home social and economic issues. When it came to the central question of the rearmament and war policy, the rearmament programme was accepted by a two to one vote—thereby striking a blow at the other demands which were adopted. It is true that the second day saw the victory of progressive international resolution for east-west trade, etc. But this did not directly reverse the vote on rearmament. The plea of ‘loyalty’ to the Government, while unable to defeat the militancy on immediate home issues, was successful in putting over the central policy of capitalism, which is responsible for the reactionary social and economic policy. *Forward* was quick to seize on the contradiction:

Congress accepted the rearmament programme by a 2 to 1 majority; but it rejected its inevitable consequences by demanding increased Government expenditure on the social services.

Here is the key contradiction in the present stage of political development in the working-class movement. The battle against the consequences of the war policy has not yet developed to the stage of the battle against the war policy. The rising militancy on home issues has not yet advanced to the stage of the conscious political fight against the policy of the arms race and reactionary war. The fight for peace is not yet entrenched in the unions, in industry and the factories. Only when this stage is reached can the victory of the left be decisively won, and the ground prepared for new advance.

Electrical Workers’ Lead

In this connection a contrast is provided by the conference of another important progressive section of the working class—the Electrical Trades Union Conference. The electrical workers have always stood in the vanguard of the British working-class movement; and the memories of 1919 and the Battle of the Albert Hall

are recalled in boastful reminiscence by aged reformist leaders who would be horrified at such action today. The Conference of the Electrical Trades Union not only adopted a firm stand for increased wages, for the restriction of profits, and against 1305; but at the same time carried by overwhelming majorities resolutions for a Five Power Peace Pact (212 to 81), for international trade union unity, against German and Japanese rearmament (297 to 19), for the withdrawal of American occupation troops from Britain (298 to 18), and for legislation to ban war propaganda. These resolutions are the more significant because every attempt was made by the right wing to utilise the old abusive manœuvre of endeavouring to play on anti-Communist prejudice in order to prevent consideration of the political issues on their merits. The manœuvre failed. The conference of the electrical workers was no conference of Communists. It was a conference of democratically elected representatives of a key section of the working class. Therefore the resolutions adopted are all the more significant.

Professor Cole's Dilemma

Professor Cole has written a series of articles under the title 'Shall Socialism Fail?' with the sub-titles 'The Democrat's Dilemma' and 'Lost Chances and Future Needs'. This carries forward his previous sharp criticism of the foreign policy of the Labour Government to questions of the home front, and especially to the widespread disillusionment with capitalist nationalisation. He admits that Social Democracy in Britain (the so-called 'Democratic Socialism' in the terms of the current fashionable alias), after six years of a parliamentary majority, has failed to produce socialism or to change in any essential the class structure of society:

In the main the class structure is left as it was; the same sorts of people hold the same relative social positions as before and, accordingly, a high proportion of those in the key positions are hostile to socialism.

He admits that capitalist nationalisation 'has set up a structure which is modelled mainly on such large-scale capitalist enterprises as I.C.I.', and that the 'Public Corporation' is 'a bad cross between bureaucracy and big business'.

A Gap in the Argument

But when it comes to the alternative, Professor Cole does not take into consideration the concrete proposals for socialist national-

isation put forward in 'The British Road to Socialism', although these are very closely concerned with the points he raises. Instead he dismisses Communist policy with the old stereotyped caricature of some kind of catastrophic 'revolution' in which 'the old social structure is destroyed, and a new one has to be created, all of a sudden', resulting in 'a ruthless authoritarian system'. He not only fails to see, what the Webbs understood, that the strength of Communist leadership is precisely that the driving force comes from below at every point, through direct mass participation in running society, in place of the 'from the top downwards' method of Western capitalism. What is significant is that even such a well-read and thoughtful publicist of the Labour Party as Professor Cole, in discussing Communist policy, is only aware of the imaginary abstract caricature, and does not attempt to discuss the actual policy of the Communist Party put forward in 'The British Road to Socialism'. This gap in thinking needs to be overcome; for the kind of proposals put forward in 'The British Road to Socialism' will in fact sooner or later have to be considered by all serious socialists if an effective alternative is to be found to the old policies which have failed.

Labour Ministers' Resignations

All these signs, from varied quarters, indicate the developing trends of criticism, opposition and questioning, alike in the organisations of the Labour Party and the trade unions, and among thoughtful members of the Labour Party. The old phase of policy and leadership which found its expression in the 1945 Government is drawing to its completion. The signals are sounding for new advance. This situation has now reached a point when it can no longer leave the leadership unaffected. It is in this context, and against this background, of increased leftward pressure from below, that we need to see the significance of the new shifts and alignments which have begun to reveal themselves in the upper leadership of the Labour Party. The changing conditions have found their reflection in the resignations of two such prominent Cabinet Ministers as Aneurin Bevan and Harold Wilson, together with John Freeman, from the Labour Government over the Rearmament Budget. These resignations are a very important indication of the political barometer. The 'Set Fair' of the 1945 honeymoon era has given place to distinctly 'Unsettled Weather'.

A Crisis of Leadership and Policy

The necessary accompaniment of the gathering militancy of the industrial working class below (shown also in recent industrial struggles, in the successes of the engineers in a number of factories, the victory of the dockers over Sir Hartley Shawcross, and the response to the May Day demonstrations in London and the big cities), and of the wide questioning in the ranks of the Labour Party membership and adoption of critical resolutions by many constituency parties, is the opening of the crisis of the reformist leadership above. Bevin and Cripps have passed from the picture. Attlee and Morrison remain in charge. Bevan has moved out to fulfil a partially critical rôle. The old formations have begun to crack; the portents of new formations and alignments appear. The crack is by no means a split. There is no indication here yet of either a new policy or a new leadership. But there is a very indubitable indication of the bankruptcy and crisis of the old policy and the old leadership. If Mr. Bevan, who only in January of this year appeared as the main protagonist of the £4,700 million Rearmament Programme in the parliamentary debate, by April proclaims the same Programme 'already dead' and denounces the Rearmament Budget based upon it, then this is evidence of a considerable speed of political development. We are not here concerned with the subjective evaluation of the personal motives, calculations or intentions of Mr. Bevan. But if Mr. Bevan claims to voice the sentiments of a considerable section of left opinion or critics in the Labour Party, then it is legitimate for the Labour Party membership to ask what is the political platform of Mr. Bevan on the main questions of the day—on rearmament, on the war policy, on the Atlantic Pact, on the anti-Soviet alignment with world reaction, on rearming Germany and Japan, on the wages fight, etc.

Tight Rope on Rearmament

On all these questions there is very little sign so far of any alternative policy offered by the Bevan group. In his letter of resignation to Mr. Attlee Mr. Bevan confined his attention to the attack on the health services and living standards in the budget. But the merciless logic of the real situation did not leave it so easy to sidestep the decisive issues of the rearmament programme and American war policy which underlies the attack on the social services. By the time of his speech in parliament he delivered a resounding

onslaught on the physical impossibility of the rearmament programme and on the American economic menace to Britain. Did this mean that he was opposed to the policy of the rearmament programme or the American war alliance? No such conclusion could be drawn. A masterly ambiguity was maintained, by which the dramatic appearance of criticism was combined with the practical reality of support. The stern choice of the real situation, however, will not so easily permit an indefinite continuance of a performance on the tightrope.

War Crisis Deepens

For there is no question that the war crisis is deepening. Mr. Morrison may seek to demonstrate his contempt for the office of a contemporary British Foreign Secretary whose only function is to fulfil American orders, by ostentatiously answering questions on the price of Festival cups of tea—as at any rate representing a question on which he can attempt to take independent decisions without consulting Washington. But the fact remains that in his short period of office he has carried very much further the surrender to the American war policy in the Far East. By surrendering to the American demand for ‘United Nations’ economic sanctions against China, he has not only struck a blow at British trade and at the economic basis of Hong Kong, but has further facilitated the American strategy of step-by-step extension of the war in the Far East. By surrendering to the American thesis on Formosa, with his declaration that the Cairo pledge to recognise Formosa as Chinese must be ‘interpreted’ as subject to the success of the Western Powers’ aggression in Korea, he has further played into the hands of the offensive of American imperialism in Eastern Asia. American strategy strikes at the British base of Hong Kong to strengthen the American base of Formosa. American stockpiling strategy has built its economic stranglehold on British Empire possessions in South East Asia. Nor has Mr. Morrison improved his policy of surrender to the American war strategy in the Far East by his policy of attempted blustering in the Middle East on behalf of the oil monopoly against the Persian people. The fires of war and threats of war are being kindled by imperialist strategy in every region of the world, while the monstrous arms arsenals are being built up on a scale without parallel for future destruction and devastation. Never was the need greater to strengthen the fight for the reversal of the policy of war and the arms race, and to rally the peoples of the world in the campaign for a Five Power Peace Pact.

The Hour of Choice

The internal battle in the British labour movement over the future of labour policy is bound up, not only with the future of Britain, of the British working class and socialism in Britain, and even the very existence of the British people, but equally with the future of the world, of world war or world peace. The signs of a new stirring and questioning, of critical trends, of the beginnings of strengthened activity and militancy, are necessary and healthful signs. But there is no time to be lost. The great questions, not only of social and economic policy at home, but of war and peace alignment which govern the entire present situation, need to be squarely faced. The rearmament programme is disorganising British economy and preparing war; the American stranglehold is being drawn tighter; Toryism is on the offensive. The hour calls for unity in the common struggle against Toryism and reactionary policy; and such unity calls for a common programme which can rally all the progressive forces of the labour movement and the British people. It is as a contribution to such a common programme that 'The British Road to Socialism' presents its view and its proposals on the big questions of policy and perspective before us.

May 15, 1951.

R.P.D.

The Editor of LABOUR MONTHLY will be very glad to receive contributions in the form of finished articles or of suggestions and data for articles. The customary proviso must be made that no responsibility is undertaken for manuscripts sent to him nor can he promise to enter into correspondence regarding contributions not accepted.

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LABOUR AND REARMAMENT

S. O. DAVIES, M.P.

IF we are to view this matter of Labour and Rearmament in such a way as to come to a correct judgment, we must first of all realise what a contrast it presents with the past development of the Labour movement. We have to remember what is fast being forgotten, the Labour Party's long record of struggle against Rearmament and the Arms Race. It dates back to the beginnings of the Labour Party just over 50 years ago. The part played by Keir Hardie, now looked up to as the chief founder of the Labour Party, is being forgotten. Yet from the day of its formation, right up to his last utterances, Keir Hardie fought against rearmament as a necessary part of his fight against war. Keir Hardie did not deal in the usual platitudes about the 'desirability of peace', with which the Tory and Liberal warmongers tried to dope their audiences. He attacked the warmongers directly, the naval and military budgets, the merchants of death, the armament rings. In this the Labour Party were proud to follow his lead. When the naval budget alone before 1914 rose to £50 millions, the Labour Party attacked. When the Tories in the days of the Dreadnought battleships pressed for new warships with the cry 'We want eight and we won't wait' . . . it was the Labour Party which resisted this interested outcry—which was afterwards revealed to have been started by one of the merchants of death circulating unwarranted rumours about secret armaments of Germany. The Labour Party retorted by spreading such pamphlets as 'Dreadnoughts and Dividends', and by showing what was bound to be the outcome of a European arms race, if unchecked. Or let us recall the period that is little more than twenty years ago, when Arthur Henderson as British Foreign Secretary at the setting up of the international Disarmament Conference gladly became its President and in that capacity strove to get the nations to disarm.

Remember the warning Arthur Henderson uttered to the nations and above all to the Labour Movement in his book *Labour's Way to Peace* when, in answer to the argument that states by increasing their armed strength would thus maintain peace, he wrote:

That method in the last analysis rests on contradictory arguments: on an attempt to perform the impossible feat of each State being stronger than its neighbour. It entails the reversion to international anarchy. . . . It

can hardly be called a risk because it has throughout history proved a certainty. It has always ended in war, and always will.

Remember, too, how before 1939 the Labour Party in parliament repeatedly voted against the arms estimates and withstood the taunts of the Tories, then and since, that the Labour attitude would have left Britain naked and defenceless against Hitler. Not so, the Labour Party argued—and argued quite rightly—arms is not a simple matter of the number of rifles and other weapons. ‘Arms is a question of policy; a vote against the arms estimates is a vote against the Tory policy of how they are preparing to use these arms’.

Yes; the Labour Party was completely justified in its arguments then, Arthur Henderson was completely and entirely right in the case he put for disarmament and against the arms race.

Today we use the same words, ‘Rearmament’ and ‘Arms Race’ as did Arthur Henderson in the ’thirties, as did Keir Hardie in the first fifteen years of the century. But what we mean by these words is almost something different; it is so gigantic, so vast, so beyond all past measure.

There is an Eastern fable about a giant bird of prey with claws of steel. Where other birds seem to grow less as they soared upward into the distance, this monstrous bird grew greater and greater until the shadow of its wings covered whole nations and shut off from them the life-giving rays of the sun. It may be a fable, but it is true for Rearmament.

Seventy-five years ago there were about 24,000,000 men, women and children in England and Wales; and the British arms expenditure was just £24,000,000 or a pound per head per annum. Then it began to mount up. The arms scare had started. Governments were swayed by the belief in an arms race. W. E. Gladstone, the famous ‘Grand Old Man’, resigned as Prime Minister because in his Liberal Cabinet he was defeated by those who claimed an increase in navy estimates. By 1897 British arms expenditure was £40,000,000. The imperialist war in South Africa followed. Fourteen years passed by and by 1913 the Liberal Government, now completely in the hands of the imperialists, expended on arms £86,000,000 in face of Labour Party protests. The war of 1914-18 followed, that slaughter-house of a generation of the young men of Europe. By 1938 British arms expenditure was £263,000,000 or thrice as much as in 1913. The last war followed. But since the end of the last war the bird with steel claws has soared higher still,

darkening the sky. The announced three-year programme of arms expenditure, begun this year, is actually £4,700,000,000 or over one hundred pounds per head of the present population of England and Wales, or in money figures, sixty times the level of 75 years ago. It is a monstrous growth, with nothing to match it in the history of earlier civilisations. Today arms expenditure is threatening to engulf civilisation.

To many trade unionists the most shocking feature of it is that a Labour Government has sanctioned this terrific arms expenditure.

The social effects of it are also terrifying. Every worker and every housewife knows it already in the strain on the family budget. Prices are up, of food, clothing, fares, household goods, of everything, nearly.

Further, it is now threatening to become the Government's frankenstein. It not only provides our traditional political enemies with all the ammunition they may need, but it is now undermining and threatening to destroy all that the Labour Government has done to its credit since 1945. And this is what the dollar warmongers have consistently been working to achieve. Even within recent weeks they were not sure that the Labour Government had completely knuckled under to them, and had shed all the principles on which the Labour Movement had been built. The cornering, and then the withholding of much-needed materials by the Americans was deliberately done with a view to embarrassing our peace industries and social and welfare services. While the American Government were demanding, that is to say, the application of economic sanctions to China they were applying the same kind of sanctions to Britain.

The price to be paid, and now being paid, so that such sanctions should be lifted from us, was the serious weakening of our Health Services, our capitulation on Formosa, and our co-operation, much to our loss, in applying sanctions against the Chinese people.

Small wonder then that this £4,700,000,000 on arms and our disastrous alignment with American imperialism are having an effect within the Labour Party or that there is a growing dissatisfaction. There is a shaking of the confidence reposed in the leaders. There is an opening up of sharp divisions of opinion—of which the Tories are trying to reap a momentary advantage, with the further result that some in the Labour Party are thinking it were best to hide these divisions of opinion and cover them up.

On the contrary, these signs of a fight over policy within the

Labour Party are signs of health. Only by controversy within its own ranks as to what is the best policy will the best policy ever emerge.

Unity in the working class movement is essential. But it must be a real unity, not a surface unity. It must be unity in the fight for a true socialist policy. And in my opinion the only consistently socialist policy is the fight for peace and for disarmament, and never to forget our traditional enemies—capitalism and imperialism.

FROM THE TELENGANA PRISONERS

On behalf of the reprieved Telengana prisoners—of whom one is Janardhan Reddy, whose moving letter we published last month—the Secretary of the Telengana Defence Committee writes:

The prisoners know well that it is the support of numerous friends and lovers of justice and democracy throughout the world that has secured for them the measure of clemency which they have won. . . We feel confident that we shall establish the innocence of these prisoners and with renewed public support shall secure their liberty.

The prisoners ask me to remind you that scores of other peasant lads like them are accused on capital charges in Telengana whose lives will be doubly imperilled unless adequate defence facilities are provided. They request you not to give up the noble cause of defence of helpless innocence for which no provision has yet been made by the State.

The prisoners would be glad if you and other friends would correspond with them (in English, Urdu or Telugu) c/o the District Jail, Secunderabad, Deccan. They will be greatly heartened by the receipt of your letters although they may not immediately be able to reply due to restrictions on the postage permitted to them by the jail rules.

TRUTH AND PEACE

IVOR MONTAGU

‘THE rulers of the Kremlin have abandoned any serious attempt to improve the lives of the people they control. They are taking men and women and resources under their control and welding them into a mighty machine for war and conquest’.

These words were spoken by President Truman on Saturday, April 14, 1951. They were printed next day in the *News of the World* (‘Certified Net Sale exceeds 8,000,000’), and in I don’t know how many other newspapers.

Look at them. Read them again. Do we wake? Do we dream? No. These are not visions. These are his words.

‘Any serious attempt . . .’ Before me rises the living picture of the Soviet people as they are, and as I know them.

I see the towering shapes of the crane-surmounted dwellings, building swiftly on the Moscow streets, the neat warm cottages in the countryside, the lovely trees and gardens, the shops bursting not just with goods, but with people buying them, at prices that have fallen four times within a tiny space.

I see the miles upon miles of tree-clumps and shelter belts, the pioneers crossing the wind-swept deserts, the canals that are turning them to blossoming valleys, the mountains that give way to man, the rivers that raise their levels hundreds of feet, the climate made more clement, the grapes and cucumbers that invade the arctic.

I see the youth, smiling and confident, calm and earnest. I recall the children, with life before them, and happy and sure as members of one family with no barriers to betterment. I remember an old lady in her parlour, with the medals for her farm-work, and a son an engineer in Kiev and a daughter a bridge-builder in Erivan.

I remember the plans for conquest, the reams of newspaper articles, the acres of posterage, the kilometers of film, the oceans of argument, embracing, obsessing, uplifting everyone, in the one battle to which mankind should truly turn, the contest to soften the harshness of nature.

And I remember the incredulity, horror and loathing with which all, all, no matter age, sex or way of livelihood, speak of war.

I look back at President Truman’s words. What do they mean? Is he deceiving or deceived? A terrible danger hovers about such falsehood, and not firstly for those about whom it is spoken. To

put it in an old-fashioned way, a blessing cannot lie upon the land that has such leaders. Not for nothing is the Ninth Commandment 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour'.

A land cannot prosper that is taught to believe that black is white. To avert its eyes from the life-giving sun and mutter 'There is no light'.

Who is President Truman, that he seems not to know, when he should know, and could know, of the life of beauty and music and serenity, and the flowering of the spirit of man, that is coming to pass beyond the seas?

He is not mad. Is he bad? Is he ignorant? He is no inmate of a lunatic asylum, no crude, unkempt dweller in the Appalachian mountains. He is no reckless journalistic parasite of a numbers gang, sandwiching catchpenny headlines amid teen-age murders and bathing Bikinis. No Hearst. He is the respectable executive of the most powerfully armed state in history, with the life and flash-instant death of scores of thousands hanging on his single word.

Which is worse, which should most cause the world to shudder—to think of all the power and tradition and loyalty attaching to his great office at the disposal of a man who knows, and yet can falsify for policy? Or to think of it in the hands of one so entrapped and surrounded by hard-faced malicious informers and thrice-purged sycophants that, like some tyrant of old, he really does not know, and never can know, the shining truth? There is no third explanation.

Truman is not alone. On February 13, 1951, speaking in solemn debate in the Commons chamber, Britain's Prime Minister said: 'The Soviet Union never disarmed after the last war'.

Why did he say this? This is not a case of exaggeration in the hotness of debate, afterwards repented and corrected when tempers cool. This is not a case of ignorance. The man who has had to see his health promises vitiated for want of health centres, his schooling laws nugatory for want of school-building, his housing programme stay paper, and the costs of living fly to heights that impoverish those who placed their faith in him, all because of arms—this man should know that even a Socialist country could not reconstruct the utter devastation of the former war, cut its prices, raise its standards and embark on huge projects of the transformation of nature, all the while maintaining the wartime level of armaments (whatever filth his spies and jealous émigrés may whisper in his ear). But perhaps he does not know of these achievements, does not

believe them. The Soviet Union is no manless community, its women and weaklings conducting life, its men remote in uniform. In every gathering, no matter where, its writers, doctors, workers, farmers are men who were once soldiers and now, bemedalled, are farmers, workers, doctors, writers once again. Perhaps this, too, Mr. Attlee does not know. But, merely by using his reason, with the memory clear of the Guards who in 1919 marched on Whitehall to demand demobilisation, the G.I.s who in '45/46 badgered their Generals at a dozen war stations, the Russians who in 1917 started the ending of a Great War by simply walking home, what sort of inhuman automata does he imagine the Soviet Union could have kept serving indefinitely after its sufferings of 1941/5 supposing it 'never to have disarmed'?

But the Prime Minister did not say what, whether right or wrong, he might credibly have imagined and believed: 'disarmed partially', 'disarmed less than I would have liked', 'disarmed less than I expected'. No. He said what cannot be true, what he cannot believe to be true, and what he has not revoked: 'never disarmed'. A drop of distilled poison, blackening and corrupting the veins of human intercourse and human faith.

Why did Mr. Attlee tell the Archbishops who wrote to him in winter, 1949/50, asking for the prohibition of the atomic bomb, that the obstacle was the Soviet refusal to allow international inspection agents inside their frontiers, when Vyshinsky at the United Nations had said 'I invite them to enter—to touch and to see'? Is it possible that, as the British press does not generally publish the offers of Soviet statesmen, so Mr. Attlee, the day the offer was made, had failed to read his dispatches and read only the usual distortion or omission over his breakfast marmalade? Why did Mr. Attlee in autumn, 1950, tell the foreign press in London that the system of atom bomb control advocated in the Stockholm Appeal 'would operate only in free countries, but would be no restraint on the totalitarian states', when no such discrimination is contained therein? Is it possible that he lives so remote from popular contact that he had never seen the appeal, but only examined some forged substitute, presented to him, to the accompaniment of trumpets, as some triumphant secret service 'capture' justifying the immense and never-accounted-for secret appropriations? Why did the *Manchester Guardian* this spring write that the 'peace partisans' are constantly teaching the difference between aggression (as sinful and usually done by bourgeois armies) and peaceful liberation (as blessed and

a rôle for which the Russian Army is eminently suited), when the peace movement has adopted and dispersed all over the world its plain and simple definition: 'The aggressor is that state which first uses armed force under any pretext against any other state'? And why, challenged, did that paper then seek to justify its charge by reference to a speech which as its 2,000 auditors could testify, contained no passage that could be quoted as even remotely corresponding to the allegation? And why did Mr. Shinwell, on April 22, 1951, tell his constituents in Durham that 'the Communists are always demanding that Britain and the United States should reduce their armaments, but do not make the same demands to Russia', when, as he knows well, the Communists in every country support the Peace movement, and—how can he fail to know?—the demand of the Peace movement in respect to armaments is that *all* the Great Powers should 'undertake a gradual, simultaneous and similarly proportioned reduction of all their armed forces, on land, on the sea and in the air', such reduction to be controlled by an international control body, established within the framework of the Security Council, operating by simple majority with no veto, which control 'must not only be exercised over the existing armed forces, arms and arms production declared by each country, but must also include investigation, on demand of the international control organ, of armed forces, arms and arms production suspected to exist additionally to those declared'?

I am concerned here about the moral aspect.

Not loyalty at home, nor trust abroad, nor respect anywhere, can rest upon falsehood.

Here the untruth is patent. Spoken wilfully, or in pitiful ignorance, the result is the same. It may serve for a time, to still the questionings of a Durham miner who once knew Shinwell as an apostle of the brotherhood of man, and now sees his henchmen hunting Malaysians with flame-throwers. It may serve, for a short space, to quiet the qualms of those of Truman's compatriots who find it hard to equate Christianity with napalm. It may momentarily appease McCarthy.

But at what a price! Those who banish from the British breakfast table and the British air all but orthodoxy on foreign questions may themselves forget that there is a world outside of whose thoughts they do not dispose. Nevertheless, it is there, and it moves. When Attlee misrepresented the Stockholm Appeal, 500 million people knew it. What were the thoughts of the myriads of Soviet

citizens, years out of uniform, painstakingly and devotedly building the better life for them and theirs, when they learned Britain had a Prime Minister who could face the world and say they had never even demobilised? What are the feelings of the Italian, jailed for wearing the dove, the West German, rubber-truncheoned for speaking on a peace platform, the American, hounded as a 'foreign agent', the Sudanese, haled to 'justice' for attending Warsaw, when they hear Shinwell falsifying their purpose, spit upon their sacrifice?

And to what end? Facts winna ding. Truth prevails. Sooner or later. If not easily, then the hard way.

It seems to me that it happened once before, when I was nearly 20 years younger. In those days Hitler and his myrmidons sat in their seats of power. Then, too, arms and hatred were said to be for necessary defence against barbarism, 'guns instead of butter' for the good of men. How many of those who knew that what was said was false yet remained silent and acquiescent—and not in Germany alone? They share the guilt of what then befell the world.

Today we are pursuing a policy that, in the name of protecting Korea, everyone knows has already resulted in the slaughter of two million Korean civilians and the destruction of every material value that the Korean people possessed. We are pursuing a war and destroying our young men for a professed purpose that, everyone knows, could have been achieved without another shot fired, by following the peace-making course that the majority of the United Nations General Assembly wanted, but by American Government pressure, was prevented from following. We are amassing armaments, destroying our livelihood and preparing an explosion we cannot control, to an extent, which, everyone knows, is tolerated only on the basis of incitements that are utterly untrue.

Who does not know this? Everyone knows this, even if he tries not to. On everyone is placed a personal responsibility.

Who does not want the end of the cold war? Who wants a hot war? Who does not want negotiation? Who does not want agreement? But peace, the need of all, is become treason and negotiation transubstantiated into a negation of Christian morals.

Will you tear asunder the tissue of lies? Will you support what you know to be good, even though it means turning your back on what you know to be false? The Bureau of the World Peace Council, meeting in Copenhagen, calls for a response by signatures in

hundreds of millions, 'thus rendering invincible the will of the people for peace'.

A hundred years ago a Copenhagen story-teller told the now familiar story of the Emperor who likewise clad himself in a tissue of lies. No counsellor would gainsay him, 'because', wrote Hans Andersen, 'in doing so he would have declared himself a simpleton or unfit for office'. So the Emperor marched along in clothes that were as false as Attlee's arguments. But in the end a little child spoke up 'and what the child had said was whispered from one to another'.

'At last', says Andersen, 'it was cried out by all the people'.

Do you testify today. Tear off the lies that hide the ugly fact. Break silence, and testify the will to peace. And at last it will be cried out by all the people, and so, be rendered invincible.

UNDER SOVIET COMMUNISM...

THE dominant motive in everyone's life must be not pecuniary gain to anyone but the welfare of the human race, now and for all time. For it is clear that everyone starting adult life is in debt to the community in which he has been born and bred, cared for, fed and clothed, educated and entertained. Anyone who, to the extent of his ability, does less than his share of work, and takes a full share of the wealth produced in the community, is a thief, and should be dealt with as such. That is to say, he should be compulsorily reformed in body and mind so that he may become a useful and happy citizen. On the other hand, those who do more than their share of the work that is useful to the community, who invent or explore, who excel in the arts or crafts, who are able and devoted leaders in production or administration, are not only provided with every pecuniary or other facility for pursuing their chosen careers, but are also honoured as heroes and publicly proclaimed as patterns and benefactors. The ancient axiom of 'Love your neighbour as yourself' is embodied, not in the economic but in the utilitarian calculus, namely, the valuation of what conduces to the permanent well-being of the human race. Thus in the U.S.S.R. there is no distinction between the code professed on Sundays and that practised on week-days. The citizen acts in his factory or farm according to the same scale of values as he does in his family, in his sports, or in his voting at elections. The secular and the religious are one. The only good life at which he aims is a life that is good for all his fellow men, irrespective of age or sex, religion or race.

(From *Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation*, by the Webbs.)

MAIMING THE YOUNG

ALBERT E. KAHN

A FEW days ago my nine-year-old son asked me, 'Why are we having atom bomb drills in school, Daddy? Will atom bombs be dropping on us here?' My son is a slender, gentle-hearted child, dreamy and yet gay by nature; he should not be obsessed by visions of violence, terror and flaming death. Such visions, however, are today haunting the minds of millions of American children.

Throughout the United States, schoolchildren are being taught to hide under their desks with their eyes closed and their heads buried in their arms, to stand with their backs to windows and their faces pressed against walls, to crouch on the floor with pieces of cloth draped over the exposed parts of their bodies. These measures, the children are advised by their teachers, will protect them not only from flying glass and falling debris but also from the flash-burns and death-dealing radiation of atomic bomb explosions.

In different cities the style of drill varies. As the December 27, 1950, issue of the *National Guardian* reported:

At a teacher's signal public school children in Albany, N.Y., pull down classroom shades and crawl under their desks. After an interval for an imaginary blast, they are led into corridors where they lie on the floor against the walls.

In Los Angeles children are being trained to respond to a signal by kneeling beside their seats, burying heads in their hands. In Portland, Oregon, they go down on their knees, press their faces to the floor. . .

In one Los Angeles grade school a special instructor makes sudden appearances in the different classrooms and shouts, 'Drop!' The children must immediately throw themselves under their desks. So effective has this conditioning been that children in this school often automatically start to drop to the floor when they meet the special instructor in the corridors.

On February 8, 1951, this news item appeared in the *New York Daily Compass*:

About 890,000 children ducked under desks in 800 city schools yesterday at a signal from the teachers that a simulated atom attack was under way.

There had been previous drills based on an assumption of warning before an atom attack and the children had time to go to shelters. Yesterday's was the first 'sneak attack' drill with the youngsters forced to take cover within their classrooms. . .

FROM THE CHINESE



On the banners which the children carry is written: 'Celebrate the Fourth.'

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC



on of the Chinese People's Republic!' —By CH'EN LIN-CHAI (1949)

Superintendent (of Schools) Jansen said the drill was fine and will be repeated.

Reporting this same event, the *New York Post* observed that 'New York's hundreds of thousands of school children were asked to face the fact of life in the atomic age'.

One principal of a New York school has sent this solicitous message to the parents of his pupils:

In order to save your child from burns in the case of direct exposure to an A-Bomb we are asking him or her to bring to school a piece of sheet large enough for him to curl up under. Will you send it with him? Write his name on it in ink. He is to keep it in his desk for use in emergencies. It will be impossible in our time limits (for preparations for atom bomb attacks) to have children put on snow suits. Will you therefore equip children with long stockings instead of snow suits?

In Inglewood, California, schoolchildren have been given dog tags to wear which denote their blood type and classification for transfusions

Needless to say, this atmosphere is not conducive to a tranquil state of mind among children. Cases of hysteria are multiplying among boys and girls throughout the country. Medical groups report a swift rise in the number of children suffering severe emotional disturbances. Parents tell of being awakened at night by the terrified cries of their children who are having nightmares about atom bomb raids.

Typical is the case of a small boy in Chicago who recently asked his mother, 'Please, Mummy, can't we go to some place where there isn't any sky?'

The problem of the mounting widespread anxiety among children is being attentively studied by educators and civilian defence officials. 'We are making every effort not to disturb the children emotionally—especially the little tots', states Superintendent of Schools, Samuel E. Fleming, of Seattle, Washington. The New York State Educational Department has issued directives recommending that atom bomb drills be made 'part of dramatic play' and become a 'fairly natural, everyday experience . . . as we have learned to brush our teeth'. Another suggestion is that children be trained to smile during the atom bomb drills.

Some experts are of the opinion that the drills can actually have a salutary effect. 'If you were to find your youngsters playing war games and pretending to atom bomb each other, you should encourage them', Dr. Kurt Fantl, consulting psychiatrist to the

Los Angeles City Health Department, has declared. 'You might be horrified at what you consider their cruelty or savagery, but you would be wrong'.

The Assistant Education Commissioner of New York State Civil Defence, Dr. Edwin Van Kleek, philosophizes: 'A child's fear is a reflection of a parent's attitude . . . You have to train a child to keep from running in the path of an automobile. Is it not then logical to explain to him what to do if an atom bomb strikes?'

Many mothers and fathers, however, are not impressed by this logic. In city after city, parent groups are demanding that the drills be halted. Three parents' associations in Brooklyn, N.Y., have gone on record against the drills. The Committee to Combat War Tensions in the Schools has advanced this slogan: 'Peace is the only cure for war tensions'.

A delegation of twenty-five mothers representing the Committee of Philadelphia Women for Peace presented the Board of Education in that city with a statement which declared that

to use the Civilian Defence programme as a method to condition children for living in a world at war: to use children as messengers of propaganda . . .; to send them home hysterical to their parents in order to get parents to act . . .; this is not preparedness but insanity, an insanity we do not wish to see reflected in our children.

The Philadelphia mothers recommended instead that 'the educators in this city turn their energies toward fighting for the funds denied them by the plans for war, the funds needed for more schools, more teachers . . . We propose a programme of education toward peace and friendship with the peoples of all countries . . .'

These Philadelphia mothers went to the core of the problem. The real purpose behind the atom bomb drills in American schools is not that of protecting schoolchildren—no matter what some well-meaning but misguided citizens may think. Their real purpose is to help acclimate children and parents alike to the idea that war is inevitable and to educate them to the 'necessity' of dropping atom bombs on children in other lands. The systematic promotion of terror among the children is intended to persuade their parents to support war preparations.

There are, of course, other ways in which American children are being fitted into the war pattern. In more and more schools the atmosphere of the army barracks is coming to prevail in classrooms and playgrounds. Illustrative of this trend is a bulletin entitled *Preparation for a National Emergency*, now being distributed

among teachers at the Central Needle Trades High School in Manhattan, which reads in part:

During the homeroom period the informal spirit must give way to a stricter and more formal relationship between the teacher and his class. A military discipline should prevail.

The swearing of allegiance to the colours should become part of the daily routine.

A close inspection of the physical appearance of the student should then follow. . . This should be done with military precision with the class at attention. •

In the gymnasium the Marine Handbook will supplement the course of study. Formal drills and exercises will take the place of the informal game period.

‘A struggle is going on for the souls of our children’, writes the journalist, B. Z. Goldberg, in the *Jewish Day*. ‘Those who already have the press and radio in their grasp want to take over the schools and mould the children into their political spirit . . . They are not satisfied in controlling what a teacher does and what he says. They want to decide what he should think. Even deep in his soul he is not permitted to resent the cold war’.

‘Loyalty’ investigations are purging the schools of teachers whose social and political opinions fail to conform to the current war standards of Washington and Wall Street. Among the more notorious of recent purges was the dismissal of eight New York teachers whose advocacy of peace and whose support of progressive causes were regarded by the Board of Education as irrefutable evidence of disloyalty and ‘conduct unbecoming a teacher’. It was not entirely coincidental that these eight teachers were all members of the Teachers’ Union and that they were all Jewish.

On the other hand, teachers with fascist inclinations have no difficulty retaining their jobs. Despite repeated protests by parents’ groups, such teachers as the following remain secure at their posts in New York schools: Mary Quinn, whose pedagogical record includes praising Hitler and Mussolini and asserting that ‘most Communists are Jews’; Gladys Laubenheimer, whose pupils have learned from her that foreign-born Americans are ‘garbage’ and ‘the scum of Europe’; Eudora Fletcher, a principal of an elementary school, who has declared, ‘Every shyster lawyer is a Jew . . . The Jews control the legal profession, the real estate industry. What do the Jews want to do—control all of America?’; and Gladys Mann, who not long ago assaulted an eight-year-old Puerto Rican boy in one of her classes, threw him to the floor and beat him

brutally, shouting, 'You dirty little Puerto Rican, why didn't you stay where you came from?'

In many parts of the country schoolteachers are now receiving printed and mimeographed instructions advising them what to tell their pupils about the international situation. According to these memoranda, American intervention in Korea is 'a defence of freedom and human rights', the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China are 'ruthless aggressors', and personages like John Foster Dulles and General MacArthur are stalwart champions of democracy. Persuading children to believe this propaganda is depicted as the 'patriotic duty' of teachers. In the words of a document issued by the Education Policies Commission and the American Association of School Administrators, education must become 'an instrument of national policy'.

'My young son, eleven years old, just came home from school', a mother recently wrote in a letter to the Teachers Union in New York City. 'I am very much upset that our schools should be teaching our children to hate. Why should youngsters learn to hate another country?' The mother added that her son had been taught in his school to sing a song preparing the children for war against the Soviet Union. This was one of the verses of the song:

Now creeps in a menace that may force us to fight. Hail, free men, hail.
There's danger ahead. It's colour is red.

Indicative of the results obtained by such educational methods is this experience of a progressive teacher:

In my social studies class a pupil asked: 'Is Russia in the United Nations?' When I said 'Yes', he retorted, 'Well, why are they? Why don't we just drop an atom on them?' When I attempted to indicate that wars bring misery and that we should attempt to settle international differences by peaceful means, another pupil added: 'Aaah, Russians aren't human beings'.

A recently published book, *Searchlight*, which is a carefully documented exposé of present conditions in New York schools, sums up the basic if unpublicised aims of the school authorities in these words:

What we want to do is bring up a generation of young people who will be ready to step into a uniform.

Your child must learn to accept the idea that another world war is inevitable. Therefore he must learn to hate Russia with an unthinking hatred.

We can no longer afford the luxury of teaching children *how* to think. . . We must control their thoughts: we must teach them *what* to think.

We need citizens who will be loyal—loyal, that is, to the need for another war.

It is not, of course, only in the nation's schools that children are being deluged with war propaganda. Radio and television programmes, motion pictures, newspaper comic strips, children's magazines, patented war games—all are being used to convince young Americans of the glories of war and the menace of Soviet Russia.

Typical of the 'comic books' distributed in the millions among children is one entitled *G. I. Joe*, which features on its cover a lurid drawing of a grinning American soldier smashing the head of a North Korean soldier with his rifle butt. Subtitles on the cover guarantee that the book contains 'Exciting Battle Action' against the 'Red Devils of Korea'. In the text, North Koreans are called 'gooks' and depicted as fiendish murderers of old men, women and children. Dozens of illustrations provide the young readers of this comic book with scenes of American soldiers slaughtering North Koreans with machine guns and flame throwers.

Confectionery and candy stores are now selling children a new brand of chewing gum. It is called 'Freedom's War Gum'. Each package contains a printed card with a picture depicting a battle scene in Korea. Chinese and North Korean troops are drawn with brutal distorted features.

It is perhaps superfluous to comment upon the character of the men who are responsible for the dissemination of such propaganda among children and the staging of atom bomb drills in schools. To describe them as bestial would be an insult to the animal world, since there are no animals which deliberately torture their young. Yet what other sort of conduct can be expected from men dedicated to enriching themselves from the mass slaughter of human beings? Statesmen, millionaires and militarists willing to burn Korean children to death with napalm bombs do naturally not hesitate from crippling the minds of American children with anguished nightmares.

There is a macabre irony to the fact that the men who are leading our nation toward war quote frequently from the Bible and invariably refer to themselves as Christian gentlemen. They would do well to recall what Jesus of Nazareth said about children: "Whosoever shall offend the least one of these, my little ones, it were better a millstone were tied about his neck and he cast into the sea".

THE PERSIAN UPSURGE

C. ALLEN

NEARLY one hundred years ago Karl Marx wrote about the Treaty the British Government imposed on Persia through military action:

England's net profit from its Persian expedition can be stated: a hatred earned in the whole of Central Asia. (*The Persian Treaty, New York Daily Tribune, June 24, 1857.*)

Today the Persian people are on the march against imperialism determined once and for all to get rid of its hated exploiters. 392,000 have signed the Peace Petition, this in a country where the peace campaign was declared illegal. Over 20,000 students demonstrated in Teheran on April 22 in support of the oil workers on strike in Abadan. *The Times* of April 27 declared that nearly seventeen thousand workers were on strike in the refinery of Abadan—a strike that is shaking the Persian ruling class to its foundations and which has made the Anglo-American imperialists furious with anger. Repression, and arrests, and even the shooting of workers by the Persian authorities did not stop the strike and the growing demands of the Persian people for nationalisation of oil. On the contrary the mass movement spread and gained strength. Even the Persian Ambassador to Britain was forced by the events in his country to state the demand for nationalisation in a Note whose language is not very diplomatic, and did not hesitate to point out that the so-called benefits oil-imperialism imposed on Persia are far from true.

Persia has not, by any standards, received a fair and reasonable share of her vast oil resources. (*The Times, April 17, 1951.*)

The movement in Persia now is truly nation-wide, and embraces every progressive section, and the most reactionary leaders dare not come out against the wishes of the majority. The recently appointed Prime Minister Hussein Ala was made to resign after nine workers were killed and eleven injured at Abadan. The demonstrators threatened to march on the Palace. The Shah dismissed Ala and appointed the 75-years-old right-nationalist Dr. Moussadek to be the new Prime Minister. Fearing the growing anger of the people the Majlis and the Senate passed the resolution nationalising the oil.

The champion of nationalisation in Britain, the Right Honourable Mr. Herbert Morrison, says indignantly that the British Government 'cannot negotiate under duress', but at the same time

threatens to send warships to the Persian Gulf to intimidate both the Persian workers and the Government. Lord Salisbury pressed for the Government 'to protect British interests in Persia'. The situation may become serious unless the British people see that the Labour Government enters into peaceful negotiations with Persia, not to cancel nationalisation, but how to solve the problem of some form of compensation.

It is no use to call pharisaically, as Mr. Morrison does, for the fulfilment of the 1933 treaty, a treaty of which even the *Economist* writes 'Persians consider this to have been reached under duress'. (March 24, 1951, p. 670.) Mr. Shinwell, in real blustering imperialist tradition, speaks of the attempt to nationalise the oil as: 'that sort of thing can only lead to serious trouble, maybe to conflict'. In the eyes of the Labour leaders nationalisation of certain industries in Britain if it serves the interests of the capitalist class as a whole is a fairly good thing. But nationalisation that would help the development of a semi-colonial country is a dangerous thing that 'can lead only to serious trouble'. To understand the crisis in all its complexity, it is vital to know some of the political background.

Persia has been for over half a century a semi-colony of Britain and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company enjoyed virtually more power over Persians than even the formal Persian Government. The Company controlled an area of over 100,000 square miles and acted like a state within a state. It is not subject to Persian Law, and it enjoys having its own police and military detachments. Apart from possessing the largest oilfields in the Middle East, the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company is the only remaining purely British Oil concern in the Middle East. The other oil companies in which British interests once predominated have now large American interests. This sole monopoly of Anglo-Iranian is not to the liking of the Americans, as will be shown later.

British Imperialism enjoyed this monopoly as can be seen by the following figures:

1913	...	248,000 tons
1929	...	5,549,000 ..
1939	...	10,329,000 ..
1945	...	17,000,000 ..
1948	...	25,000,000 ..
1949	...	31,750,000 ..

Production has gone up over six times on 1929 and 128 times on

1913. Similarly profits have risen to astronomic heights, rising in 1948 to over £70 million, in 1949 to over £65 million, and in 1950 to well over £70 million. These figures are amazing when one realises that the British Government in acquiring a majority of shares only put in 11 million pounds. The Anglo-Iranian is a blend of government and private investments, 56 per cent. of the shares being held by the Admiralty, 22 per cent. by the Burma Oil Company and 22 per cent. by other private investors.

The Americans looked on enviously. The U.S.A. decided to do everything possible to penetrate that 'gold mine'. In March, 1947, Mr. Truman, in announcing the notorious Truman Doctrine, declared that military aid would be given to Persia. At the end of 1949 the Shah visited the U.S.A. 'President Truman has informed the Shah of Persia that the United States is ready to offer "certain military assistance" to Persia and would support its requests for loans from the World Bank'. (*The Times*, Washington Correspondent. December 31, 1949).

After this declaration of Mr. Truman a number of American experts began to arrive in Teheran. These 'experts' settled down to try to rule the country. They decided and started an aerial survey of the Iranian-Soviet frontier. On May 15, 1950, the Soviet Government lodged a protest against these aerial photographs. The Americans and their Persian stooges carried on as if nothing mattered. The Soviet Government sent a further sharp note on June 20, 1950. Only then did the Persian Government assure the Soviet Union that 'further flights would not be made'. But on July 14, 1950, General Razmara, the then Prime Minister, announced that 'the U.S.A. had agreed to equip Iran's army for defensive mountain fighting'. (*The Middle Eastern Affairs*, New York, 1950, No. 8-9, p. 262). The American Ambassador promised to send machinery, meaning thereby arms.

Simultaneously with these military moves the economic position became catastrophic. 'During the six months since dissolution (of Parliament) there has been a big increase in unemployment. Many factories are now closed, and others are working short time'. (*The Times*, January 30, 1950). Twelve months later the situation is described as 'a state of affairs which for many is well-nigh intolerable'. (*The World Today*, December, 1950, p. 531). The American Seven-Year Plan, introduced with such pomp, has 'little or nothing to show for it' laments *The World Today*, published by the semi-official Royal Institute of International Affairs.

The Soviet Union, not seeking bases in Persia, offered mutual trading relations. At the end of 1949 'Russian wheat was sent to the Iranian market, which needed it badly'. (*The Middle Eastern Affairs*, New York, No. 1, January, 1950, p. 17). The pressure from the people and the growing economic crisis forced General Razmara, the late Persian Prime Minister, to sign a barter trade agreement with the Soviet Union.

But the Americans were not lying low. They were hinting that they are prepared to give better royalties for the oil. In Saudi Arabia the Americans declared a vague formula of 'fifty-fifty'. A representative of the American Socony-Vacuum Oil Company declared that his company is prepared to pay to the Persian Government 65 per cent. This was after Texas Oil Company offered 60 per cent. Finally Aramco stated it was prepared to pay 72 per cent. The British offered to raise the royalties. The people were demonstrating and demanding 'Nationalisation of the Oil'. The Majlis (the parliament), fearing the growing restiveness of the people, echoed the same demand. The Razmara Government was caught in an acute dilemma. To pacify the people or the Americans? To flout the will of the people with dissatisfaction mounting would have been to court disaster. The late General Razmara decided to play off Britain against America, and to pacify public opinion he closed down the Voice of America station, and a number of American experts were asked to leave. On October 2, 1950, Max Thornburg, the chief of a twelve-man American mission, left, together with a number of other experts, and to the British, Razmara promised to consider favourably the new proposals for oil. His pro-British policy was calculated in the following way: the British are in the South, they have a considerable number of military in neighbouring Basra and the Americans are a long distance away. In his latest political behaviour Razmara became a danger to the U.S.A. and an assassin's bullet removed him. The Anglo-American differences became daily more visible. The pro-British American journal *Time* noticed the growing divisions: 'The present lack of co-ordination between British and U.S. policy in Iran is a scandal'. (February, 1951).

Fairly soon after the murder of Razmara, Mr. MacGhee, Assistant Secretary of the State Department, arrived in Teheran, ostensibly for 'charity proposals' as described lyrically by *The Times*. By the way, this is MacGhee's third visit to Persia in under a year. Events began to move swiftly. The former Persian

Ambassador to the U.S.A. was appointed Prime Minister. Demonstrations were banned and martial law proclaimed by the same Majlis that passed a resolution to nationalise the oil, trying by this means to nullify the resolution. Another close friend of Razmara was assassinated, but the new government did not dare arrest Kashani or any other leader of the Fidayani Islam, the group that is responsible for the assassinations. Punitive measures were taken against the strikers and the already illegal Tudeh Party—the largest mass organisation in the country.

The British Government got alarmed at the big squeeze of America. Negotiations began, mark this, not with the Persians, but with the Americans to reach a settlement under which the latter will become partners in the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. The American threat to the British is that a phoney nationalisation will only bring in the Americans. 'If they lost the services of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company's employees, they would have no difficulty in recruiting international experts'. (*Observer*, April 8, 1951). The meaning of 'international experts' is clear to everyone.

The Anglo-American talks, and the exclusion of the Persians, caused the Persian Government to state openly:

The 'exploratory' oil talks between British and American representatives in Washington cannot have any validity for Persia and are considered by the Persians to be interference in their affairs. (*The Times*, April 17, 1951.)

On the other hand the Americans were determined to keep on embarrassing the British. Mr. MacGhee in a broadcast on April 9 said cynically, 'We are fully behind Iran and want to do what we can to assist Iran'. He went on to explain the nature of the 'assistance':

What we are trying to do, as a friend of Iran and without in any way interfering in Iranian affairs, is to help Iran solve its problems and strengthen its economic and military forces. . . In 1949 we extended a 26 million dollar loan to Iran to buy military equipment. Substantial quantities of military supplies are now being shipped to Iran.

A most interesting admission, which reads almost like a sensational diplomatic leak.

But irrespective of their differences, British and American imperialism are determined to cling to oil and to strategic bases, even if Britain becomes the junior partner to America. In a recent publication, The Royal Institute of International Affairs speaks openly of their war plans:

Finally, it is in the Middle East that bases may be necessary for offen-

sive operations should war with Russia break out. (United Kingdom Policy, 1950, pp. 52-3, Chapter written by Major-General Sir Ian Jacob.)

The Persian people are fighting for independence of both imperialisms and will be far from satisfied with any phoney measures of nationalisation. Even MacGhee, speaking of the Middle East as a whole, was forced to admit that there is:

Strong upsurge of nationalism, a suspicion of our basic motives in proffering assistance, an innate fear of wealth, a tendency to suspect our aims in the 'cold war' and reports of racial discrimination in the United States. (Quoted in *Middle Eastern Affairs*, New York, May, 1950. p. 157).

Whatever may happen in Persia, one thing is clear, that Britain has become the junior partner to America, and the fight in Persia, as in the Middle East as a whole, is against Anglo-American imperialism. Writing nearly sixty years ago Lord Curzon had the following memorable words in his book *Persia and the Persian Question* (1892):

Afghanistan, Transcaspia, Persia to me . . . are the pieces of a chess board upon which is being played out a game for the domination of the world . . . the future of Great Britain . . . will be decided not in Europe. (Vol. I, p. 221.)

The people of Persia fighting for their independence will help decide their own future, and contribute to the fight of the British people for their own independence of imperialism. For the struggle of the Persians and the British people against Anglo-American imperialism is basically one and the same struggle.

There are still available from earlier years some LABOUR MONTHLY pamphlets that are

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1. THERE ARE NO ARYANS, by R. Page Arnot. Race theories exposed. Price 6d.
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From The Manager, *Labour Monthly*, 134 Ballards Lane,
London, N.3.

FROM THE LABOUR MONTHLY OF
25 YEARS AGO

MEMORY OF THE GENERAL STRIKE

This time we print in article form selections from the LABOUR MONTHLY of June, 1926, which we brought out with considerable difficulty, overcoming with the help of our Printers obstacles which prevented the appearance of many other monthlies. The whole issue was devoted to the General Strike. In addition to the articles from which selection is made it contained a number of other items including a detailed account of the struggle in one of the ten divisions in which England was divided under the Emergency Powers Act. (Ed., L.M.)

EVERY prediction, policy and warning of the revolutionaries has been justified by the events of May. The Government's nine months of preparations have led to the inevitable and provoked conflict between the entire organised strength of capitalism and the working class in Britain, which the reformist leadership refused either to foresee or to prepare for, and proved unable to conduct. This conflict has proved the first great mass struggle between the united working class and the ruling class since the days of Chartism, and the opening of a new revolutionary era in Britain. The bourgeoisie believe that by their victory the revolution is henceforth killed in this country. They fail to see that the exact opposite is the case, and that the events of the past month are the greatest mass-revolutionary lesson in British history. In this conflict the forms of democracy have been flung to the winds, and the naked force of the State has been revealed in action against the working class. The unhesitating solidarity, enthusiasm and fighting energy of the workers in response has been the triumphant vindication of the working class, and the guarantee of future victory, and has proved the truth of the revolutionary contention that the masses in Britain are already far in advance, in class-instinct and revolutionary courage, of their backward leaders. That this first stage of the new revolutionary battle of the British workers should have been lost and betrayed by the collapse of the reformist leadership was inevitable. But the lesson will be learned. Even the bitter experience of defeat is an essential part of the learning of the revolutionary

task. The crimes, follies and treacheries of the reformist leadership are paid for in the blood of the workers. It is a heavy price. But the fight goes on. . .

IT is not a question of this or that individual leader. There is no need to palliate or minimise the personal failure that took place of those in whom the working class had placed its trust, and with whom the working class will have to settle its accounts. The picture presented by those most directly responsible is too obvious to need underlining. Their every word and act and gesture breathed a spirit of shameful humiliation and impotence; a confusion, distortion and evasion of the issues; a cringing servility and whining to the bourgeoisie; a fear and distrust of the workers; and finally a complete abdication and breakdown before the magnitude of what was involved. Their calling of the general strike without any expectation of having to carry it out, and consequently without any serious preparation beforehand, was an act of irresponsibility; their final blind faith in the obvious Samuel hoax of a 'gentleman's agreement', at a time when the bourgeoisie was bringing every weapon into play against the workers, was, on the kindest interpretation, an act of greenhorns unfit to be let out without a nurse and, on a more realistic interpretation, rather worse. But all this personal failure was only the expression of something deeper; and it is this deeper underlying failure, which led to all these results, that is of revolutionary concern. This colossal treachery was not simply the treachery and failure of a handful of individuals; it was the treachery and failure of a whole policy, of a whole type of leadership, of the whole ruling, dominant tradition hitherto in the working-class movement, of the whole Second International. Unless this is recognised and changed, nothing is changed. The task of revolutionary propaganda is to deepen and widen the existing resentment against the particular specific acts and particular individual leaders into a conscious revolutionary understanding of the events that have taken place and a consequent constructive aim of future policy. . .

FOR this leadership to call a general strike was a mockery. They had preached against the general strike. They had sworn their eternal opposition to the whole principle of the general strike. They had done everything to prevent any preparations for it, and to disarm the working class for any struggle, both materially and morally. Their calling of the general strike was a surrender to the overwhelming mass pressure on the one side, and the forcing tactics of the Government on the other, which left them no escape despite

their 'grovelling'. It was a dishonest surrender against their own convictions; and the dishonesty is shown by nothing more clearly than by the fact that, the moment it is over and the defeat for which they prepared has taken place, the same leaders come hurrying forward to declare that the general strike is wrong in principle and in practice, and that thenceforward the last should have been heard of it. If they had been honest, they would either have handed over the leadership to those who did believe in it, or they would have openly come forward and confessed their error, confessed that the struggle was inevitable and that the working class could only save itself by fighting, and have henceforth thrown their whole energy into winning the fight. They did neither. They called the general strike. They poured out the life-stream of working class sacrifice and enthusiasm. But they did nothing to carry forward the struggle or give a leadership worthy of that sacrifice. Instead, their whole effort was concentrated on limiting, restraining and sabotaging the fight, while in secret they gave themselves over to shady intrigues and negotiations with capitalist politicians, culminating in a settlement of surrender that was based, not merely on the desertion of the miners, but on the desertion of their own men. . .

THE new feature of 1926 was that for the first time the struggle was directly between the capitalist state and the whole working class. From this to conscious revolutionary struggle is an inevitable next stage. It is because they know this that the bourgeoisie are concentrating all their force on preparing for this future struggle, and are endeavouring to use the moment of victory in order to shackle the working-class movement for the future, introduce new legislation, make the general strike illegal, and in every way by process of law hold off the inevitable future. In obedience to their masters, the Right Wing leaders are proclaiming that the general strike can never happen again, and are making 'Never Again' the moral of 1926. Certainly the general strike can never happen again in the same form, with the workers' forces shackled and bound by a leadership which did not believe in the struggle, and lulled by the opiate of a tradition of passive economic weapons suitable only to the old condition of the sectional trade union struggle. When the general strike comes again, it will come with new leadership, a clearer aim, more active fighting methods, a hundred times stronger, not merely to show the passive strength of the workers, but to strike a blow at the seat of bourgeois power.

—From the Notes of the Month, by R.P.D.

A WORKERS' COUNCIL OF ACTION

On Saturday morning, 1st May, 1926, nearly a million miners were locked out. That afternoon the Special Congress of Trade Union Executive Committees called a general strike for Monday midnight. The following account of the immediate response in one locality (with names significantly left blank because of the Emergency Powers Act persecutions) on the Sunday, 2nd May, appeared as below.

PLAN OF CAMPAIGN

Objective.—To defeat the Civil Commissioner appointed for _____ Region. The Civil Commissioner is appointed by the Government and is armed with the Emergency Powers Act in order to break the strike. Our immediate aim is to prevent him doing that in this town. But in order to do that effectually we must offer a resistance throughout the whole region over which he has been given plenary powers. That is, we must defeat the Civil Commissioner and all his strike-breaking apparatus.

The E.P.A. Apparatus.—The apparatus of a regional Civil Commissioner comprises:

- (1) The arrangements and organisation built up by the Ministry of Health during the last nine months.
- (2) The arrangements and special organisation prepared by the Home Office.
- (3) The plans and arrangements devised by the War Office, Admiralty and Air Force.
- (4) Sundry other arrangements and organisations provided or prepared by Government Departments and placed under his jurisdiction.

That is to say, there will be concentrated against the strikers in the _____ Region the whole of the Civil and Military institutions that are under central control; and also the civil institutions usually classed as Local Government.

With regard to the last of these it remains to be seen whether he would be able to make the full use of them that he would wish.

The Strike-Breakers' Man-Power.—The actual bodies of men at the disposal of the Civil Commissioner are:

- (1) Local and national Government Officials.
- (2) The Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies.
- (3) Various other strike-breaking bodies, composed mainly of middle-class persons.
- (4) The Fascisti, one of whose organisations had entered into an arrangement with the O.M.S.

- (5) The Special Constabulary, in which it is likely many of the Fascisti would enrol.
- (6) The Special Civil Constabulary, a body of armed men with steel helmets organised solely for the purpose of coping with the strike.
- (7) The regular County and Borough Police Forces.
- (8) The Army, the Navy and the Air Force, equipped with tanks, machine guns, submarines, torpedo boat and aeroplanes.

Working-Class Machinery.—To meet all this we must improvise. The improvised machinery must be simple, easy to throw up, all inclusive. All activities in each locality should be centralised in a single body to be called Council of Action, Strike Committee, Trades Council or what you will: all such bodies should be linked up and centralised in the county capital town under a body responsible for the whole region.

Councils of Action.—The first task: Tonight's meeting should set up a Council of Action and plan out all the machinery and all the tasks for the locality.

The second task is to set up replicas of this Council of Action in every corresponding locality throughout the various counties, so as to make a network of Councils of Action linked up with a central directing body whose authority and scope on our side would exactly answer to the Civil Commissioner.

The Regional Authority.—The third task is to assemble the district officers of Trade Unions, men who by experience and routine are capable of thinking in terms of the counties as a single whole. In certain unions there will not exist any such divisional officers or regional committee. In such case recourse must be had to other units of the organisation until such time as formal arrangements can be entered into and a formal constitution drawn up. Meantime an assembling of district or divisional officers will in itself constitute a body of sufficient experience and make sufficient pooling of authority to do the work effectively.

Special Newspaper.—Task No. 1 can be solved tonight. The other two tasks, the building of district authority and a network of local bodies, must be solved mainly by the printing and scattering broadcast of a special strike newspaper.

Strike Bulletin.—This strike bulletin should appear each day during the strike, but it will have two purposes; it will have one purpose up to the moment the general strike is declared and another purpose thereafter. Its purpose up to the moment of the declaring of the general strike is precisely this—to organise the whole of our counties in Councils of Action and to link up the organisation in a

regional authority. It is impossible to send speakers all over the counties or to do anything else than to print this bulletin and spread it by despatch riders. In this way only can the necessary machinery be rapidly improvised.

Tasks of Councils of Action.—The Council of Action will have a number of tasks for which Sub-Committees should be set up. These will include:

Communications (Despatch Riders, etc.). Feeding Centres. Food and Transport. Co-operative Societies. Local Government. Sports (to serve a double purpose). Defence Corps. Picketing. Organisation of Women. Publicity: (a) Local Stencils, (b) Other publicity. Information.

Local Government.—The Urban District Councils, etc., are not necessarily to be handed over to the Civil Commission in their entirety. A struggle may take place for the possession of the machinery of such authority as is possessed by Boards of Guardians or Urban District Councils. It may be possible to impede the operations of the Civil Commissioner and his officers under the E.P.A.; perhaps even to transform part at any rate of the Urban District Council into strike machinery.

Food and Transport.—The T.U.C. instructions for the general strike, if and when it should come off, include the provision of Food Transport and Health Services. Whatever the intention of the General Council in laying down this instruction, it is clear that on this point depends the success of the general strike. Whoever handles and transports food, that same person controls food; whoever controls food will find the 'neutral' part of the population rallying to their side. Who feeds the people wins the strike! The problem of the general strike can be focused down to one thing—the struggle for food control.

Morale.—All these activities and all this machinery needed for these activities are designed for the purpose of defeating the Civil Commissioner's attempt to break the general strike. But they have another object. That is the building up of our own morale both locally and nationally, and the breaking down of the enemy's morale both locally and nationally. Every officer who reports that picketing has stopped his transport, every military officer who reports that he cannot trust his men to act against the strikers because of effective fraternisation, is a means by which when the report has filtered through to Whitehall the morale of the Chief Civil Commissioner, and thence of the Cabinet, is impaired and weakened.

THE POLICE PERSECUTIONS

DURING the latter part of the General Strike and in the days that followed, many hundreds of the working class were laid by the heels. In case after case these men have gone to prison for performing their ordinary trade union duty of peaceful picketing—a duty which under the Emergency Powers Act had suddenly become extremely hazardous.

In other cases men were sent to gaol for doing nothing, literally nothing. They came upon a crowd. In the usual way, curiosity impelled them to 'go over and see what is up'. They find themselves suddenly caught in a baton charge. Arrest, trial and sentence followed.

In yet another case a man is visited in his own house by two policemen: he is drawn into conversation: he reminds the policemen that they too belong to the working class. He is at once arrested, and is given a savage sentence of imprisonment. A friend of his present at the colloquy (who might conceivably have proved an awkward witness if not implicated in the charge) is stated to have said, 'I agree with him'. *For this statement he is given a month's imprisonment. . .*

Over all Great Britain things like this were happening during the month of May. For thousands of working-class homes these police prosecutions are something burned into their memory, as the Bloody Assizes of Judge Jeffreys burned into the peasantry of the West of England after the battle of Sedgemoor. And in the creation of a widespread resentment amongst the masses, the Government of Mr. Baldwin and the whole governing class may find the police pogroms and magisterial excesses will recoil on their own heads. *(There follows a five-page report of a miner sent to prison for three months for the 'offence' of selling a paper which backed the strikers.)*

THE MINERS' STRUGGLE CONTINUES

As workers we have all had a great object lesson: a lesson in solidarity. I am sure the spirit displayed during the nine days' general strike and since amongst the rank and file has done more to build up our movement, to cement every stone of it together, than all the propaganda of the last ten years. . .

—Herbert Smith, President of the Miners' Federation.

Book Reviews

STALIN ON LINGUISTICS

Concerning Marxism in Linguistics.
J. V. Stalin. (40 pp. *Soviet News*,
6d.)

THIS booklet contains all Stalin's contributions to the discussion on linguistics opened in *Pravda* in May, 1950. His immediate purpose was to clear away the confusions introduced into the subject by the late N. Y. Marr.

Marr was born in 1864 and died in 1934. He was a Georgian. Before the Revolution, following bourgeois methods, he had made a special study of the Caucasian languages, including his own. This part of his work has a permanent value. During the last ten years of his life he tried to work out a Marxist theory of the origin and evolution of language. In this he failed. His conclusions were generally accepted, but they proved singularly barren of practical results. During the overhaul of ideological work which was part of the first post-war Five-Year Plan, it became increasingly clear that linguistic studies were in a bad way, but Marr's disciples, who occupied leading positions, resisted criticism. Hence the free discussion opened in *Pravda*, which devoted two pages a week to the controversy for nine weeks.

Language, according to Stalin, cannot be regarded as part of the ideological superstructure. The superstructure is a product of the economic basis, and, like the basis, it undergoes a series of more or less rapid transformations, marking the transition from one epoch to another in the evolution of society. Language, on the other hand, persists without any fundamental change for a whole series of epochs. Moreover, in class society, it is not the product of one class but serves all classes alike as the common language of the whole people. There are no 'language revo-

lutions' corresponding to social revolutions. Nor can language be regarded as one of the instruments of production. The function of the instruments of production is to produce material wealth, whereas language serves as a medium for the exchange of ideas. Language is the direct reality of thought. There can be no thought without language.

Stalin's work on this subject is a momentous development of Marxist theory. In linguistics it reopens the way for pursuing, along Marxist lines, the comparative study of related languages—a study which, besides revealing the true nature of linguistic laws, will throw hitherto unsuspected light on primitive institutions and primitive thought. But its importance extends far beyond the domain of linguistics. It has a bearing on all problems concerning the interaction between ideological superstructure and economic basis. It is no accident that Stalin took this opportunity of enunciating the principles for the study of such problems; for at the present time, with the Soviet Union advancing to communism, with the new democracies, including China, on the road to socialism, with millions of people in all countries united, for the first time in history, in a single movement for the preservation of world peace, the ideological struggle has assumed a new significance, which will prove decisive for the future of mankind.

GEORGE THOMSON.

BATTLE OF IDEAS

On Literature, Music and Philosophy.
A. A. Zhdanov. (112 pp. Lawrence
and Wishart, 3s. 6d.)

WHATEVER your special interest may be, read and study these speeches and report. They have one basic theme, the importance of fighting the battle of ideas. Zhdanov sees literature as partisan, as the literature of a class, or, in the case of

Soviet literature, of a people. 'The decline and decay of bourgeois literature derive from the decline and decay of the capitalist system and are a feature and aspect characteristic of the present condition of bourgeois culture and literature. The days when bourgeois literature, reflecting the victories of the bourgeois system over feudalism, was in the hey-day of capitalism capable of creating great works, have gone, never to return'. Drawing conclusions from this he calls for a partisan principle in Soviet literature, and says: 'Leninism starts from the premise that our literature cannot be apolitical, cannot be "art for art's sake", but is called upon to play an important and leading part in social life'. Zhdanov drew the attention of the public to the lack of this partisan principle in the editorial boards of the journals *Leningrad* and *Zvezda*. He criticises the Leningrad Central Committee of the Party for permitting a situation to develop in which important journals had no policy. This he explains as follows: 'it (the Committee) has evidently become so engrossed in day-to-day practical work on the rehabilitation of the city and the development of its industry that it forgot the importance of ideological and educational work. . . . Our people's spiritual wealth is no less important than their material wealth'. Zhdanov's speech at the Music Workers' Conference, known in part from excerpts quoted in Werth's venomous *Musical Uproar in Moscow* comprises in its entirety a stimulating example of Marxist method in musical criticism. Soviet music, he states, should satisfy the aesthetic requirements and artistic tastes of the Soviet people. 'The people assesses a musical composition according to how profoundly it reflects the spirit of our epoch and people, and according to how intelligible it is to the wide masses'. Zhdanov gives many pointers to the development of Marxist

1921 - 1951

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musical criticism and theory of composition. He touches upon the question of nationalism, one-sided emphasis of one or other of the various elements of music, the relation to the classical heritage and its development today, and the significance of the idea of innovation, among other matters. '... not only the musical but also the political ear of Soviet composers must be very sensitive'. The partisan principle again, this time in music.

Zhdanov attaches great weight to the battle of ideas on the philosophical front. 'The creation of a text-book on the history of philosophy, the first Marxist text-book in this sphere, represents a task of enormous scientific and political significance'. In his speech to the Philosophical Workers' Conference he treats Marxism from three aspects: one, its relation to preceding philosophical systems, two, as a philosophy which explains the new world of socialism and which should participate in its transformation, and three, as an ideological weapon against the decadent philosophy of the bourgeoisie today.

By studying this book, with its trenchant and witty style, we can sharpen our weapons for the battle of ideas in Britain.

ALAN BUSH.

GREEK ARMY

Greek Resistance Army, by General Stefanos Sarafis. (pp. xxviii; 324. Birch Books, 5s.)

GENERAL SARAFIS was Commander-in-Chief of E.L.A.S., the Greek National Army of Liberation, from May, 1943, until its demobilisation in February, 1945. From July, 1946, until this present moment—when Krupp and his friends are being released—he has been held in prison and in concentration camp, although not even the streamlined military courts of Greece have been able to convict him on any charge. In this book he describes the Greek resis-

tance movement, as he saw it, from its first beginnings in the spring of 1942 to the end.

It is very much a soldier's book. Military operations against the enemy and those who collaborated with him are its main theme. The great social and political developments that accompanied the armed struggle of the people are only touched upon incidentally. Yet they emerge clearly enough.

His account falls into three main periods. First, the 'phoney' resistance; politicians and officers in Athens, squabbling over seniority and pay, bargaining for positions in the post-war government, form endless 'resistance' organisations, but not a shot is fired, not a German soldier stirs in his sleep. Sarafis' description of his mounting disgust with the strutting and posturing of these self-centred dwarfs, and of his realisation that in the villages and in the mountains the people themselves, under the leadership of a broad coalition of democratic parties, were forming guerilla bands and taking action against the enemy, these are perhaps the best pages in the book.

From the day when he accepts the invitation of E.A.M. and becomes Commander-in-Chief of E.L.A.S., there begins a sordid story, which has often been told before, though never in such detail or with such authority. The British, ready to use E.L.A.S. when they wanted Germans killed or prisoners-of-war released, were determined that Greece must remain a semi-colonial country. Their ideal was a number of small separate resistance bands, commanded, administered, and paid from Cairo. When events themselves made this unrealisable, they turned to building up with arms, money and intrigue a right-wing resistance movement, which again and again came to terms with the occupier and turned its arms against the National Army.

Finally, as the Germans drew out

of Greece in autumn, 1944, there was put into operation the British government decision—of which, of course, General Sarafis was ignorant—to prevent, by military force if need be, the formation in Greece of a popular government based upon the popular struggle for liberation.

We should read this sincere and convincing book, because much of what it describes was Britain's responsibility; and it has lessons for us now that we too are threatened with military, political and cultural subjection to an imperialist power. Lastly, may I suggest that every reader of the book write to the Greek Embassy, with a copy to Mr. Morrison, protesting against General Sarafis' continued imprisonment. This too is our responsibility and our opportunity.

R.B.

ULSTER JINGOISM

Ulster. Hugh Shearman. (427 pp. Robert Hale. 15s.)

THE Ulster Unionists rose with Victorian capitalism or descended from Anglo-Irish landlordism. No more allies or servitors of the British bourgeoisie they are, as they themselves often boast, an integral part of the British imperial system. Linked by marriage with the British aristocracy and by investments with British monopoly capitalism they are a viciously reactionary section and have not hesitated at murder and treason in their war against the Irish people.

It is in the interests of this class that Mr. Hugh Shearman has distorted history to produce his trilogy on Unionism—first an idolatrous study of Lord Craigavon, then an Orange man's handbook of Anglo-Irish relations and now *Ulster*.

Unlike the other contributors to this series Mr. Shearman is a political writer and he takes full advantage of the opportunity given him. Prior to his emergence with 'Not an Inch', Ulster toryism was without

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an accredited apologist and its propaganda consisted of vulgar abuse of Irish Nationalism and a mixture of royalist jingoism and religio-political slogans of the seventeenth century.

Shearman, however, is here attempting to give Ulster Unionism an ideology and to prove that the inhabitants of the partitioned six counties are a nation unique among the nations of the world. In this attempt he adduces some astonishing arguments, straining fact and credulity to the breaking point. 'We are surely not entirely wrong', he writes, 'in seeking some of the reasons for modern conditions in Ulster in a far off past, as long ago as paleozoic times when the great surface thrusts of a planet untrod by man first crumpled and crinkled up the layers of tough old primary rocks into the Caledonian Chains'.

But what are these modern Ulster conditions, so interestingly connected with Europe's genesis?

Most notable are a barefaced jerry-mandering and juggling of parliamentary constituencies to maintain Unionist power; a restricted franchise; a political police force; the notorious Special Powers Act and the retention of the Trades Disputes Act; 330,000 unemployed in a population not much bigger than Birmingham's, and a housing problem to which, at the present rate of building, no solution can be seen.

Mr. Sherman virtually ignores the greatest period of Ulster's history, the rebellion of 1798, when Ireland emerged as a political unit, and, ideologically allied with the revolutionaries of France and America, presented a united front to British Imperialism. Ignored in consequence are Ulster's traditional republican leaders, McCracken, Hope, Orr, Munro and Neilson, protestants and progressives to a man. The pleasing format of this book is in contrast to the ugly politics of its contents.

ANDREW BOYD.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

BOOKS

The British Coal Industry. H. Townshend Rose. Allen & Unwin. 162 pp. 12s. 6d.
Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration in Great Britain. Ian G. Sharp. Allen & Unwin. 456 pp. 25s.
New China: Friend or Foe? Naldrett Press. 3s. 6d. 128 pp.
Public Opinion in Soviet Russia. Alex Inkeles. Harvard University Press: London, Geoffrey Cumberledge. 32s. 6d. 380 pp.
The Stones of Bombay. David Martin. Allan Wingate. 224 pp. 9s. 6d.
So Gaily Sings the Lark. Robin Jenkins. Macdellan. 275 pp. 9s. 6d.

PAMPHLETS

Visit to Czechoslovakia. Seven British Clergymen. Collet's. 32 pp. 6d.
Poland: A Report of a visit by a delegation of South Wales Miners. National Union of Mineworkers (S. Wales Area). 28 pp.
How Dupes Won: Foreword by W. A. G. Roberts, President National Union of Vehicle Builders. C. Short. 28 pp. 6d.
Negotiation or War. Ivor Montagu. British Peace Committee. 16 pp. 3d.
Christians and World Peace. Stanley Evans. Society of Socialist Clergy and Ministers. 16 pp. 6d.
The British Road to Socialism. Executive Committee of the Communist Party. 22 pp. 3d.
Hungary Builds a New Education. Max Morris. Hungarian News and Information Service. 32 pp. 6d.

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mass sales and vast acreage of advertisements bulking out their total pages, have not; the goodwill of readers, and above all, the faithful fund supporters. But the financial gap is widening. In the first quarter the fund averaged £47; the target for the rest of 1951 must be £70 a month. But see the frightening drop in April, a month which coincided with the post-Budget announcements of so many price rises. I have to go back to February, 1949, for a lower figure. But this is not February, 1949; rearmament which makes necessary the rise in the cost of living makes infinitely more necessary a rise in the circulation of *Labour Monthly*. I cannot ask that 'few', that 'happy few' of fund regulars to give a penny more. Instead I want to see that few become the many. Here again a big factor is increased circulation. Some new readers will themselves join the band. If every reader who 'would dearly love to give a donation, but can't possibly' would instead bring us a new reader, that is a big indirect donation to the fund. For their benefit I will start a new Division in the Fund list: first, the names of those who pay 1s. a month to stand-in for towns not yet represented by donors; next, the steady money guarantors; and now a Third Division of those who have won two or more new readers during the month. I start with 'Stilton,' a West Country engineer; he produced three new subscribers in April. Who will be first to challenge 'Stilton' in his splendid isolation for the lead of the Third Division?

Turning to this sad April total; an unusual number of regulars were among the missing. In some cases the money arrived on May 1. We pay our bills early in the month, on the nail; early donations help. Meantime, thanks to 'Kingussie' for again rescuing 'Inverness', and to 'Swansea', too. From New York came ten dollars, as a tribute to two British sailors who handed up a £1 note at the great Willie McGee rally there. April totalled

£26 4s. 0d.

STAND-IN MONEY came from: D. Mayo, standing-in for Plymouth and Rottingdean, 2s; J. Tuckett, standing-in for Manchester, 1s; 'Billie', standing-in for Tonypany 'in memory of Lewis Jones', 1s; 'Bath', standing-in for Aylesbury, Cardiff, Totnes, Warwick and Watford, 5s.

STEADY MONEY came from: P. O'H. for 'Dublin', 2s; Anon., 'Whitechurch', 1s; 'Kingussie', for 'Inverness', 2s 6d; 'Bath', 5s; 'Swansea', 2s; C.B. 'Bristol', 1s 6d; 'Socialist Sailor', £1; 'Red Sergeant', 2s 6d; 'Belfast' (pre-paid); F.C. (U.S.A.) for 'Cheltenham' (pre-paid); 'New York' (pre-paid); D. Mayo, 10s; J. Tuckett, 1s 6d; E. D. McCallum, 10s; A.F.O., 3s; D. M. Clarke, 10s; H.G.B., 2s; L. Rowan, 6s; Q. Elliott, 6s; H.S.M., 2s 6d; 'L'Humanité, 3s; S. Morrissey, 10s; D. H. Strathern and Friends, 5s; R.F.B., £3; T. H. Coe, 4s; T. Flood, 2s 6d; H. Willcox, 2s; O. Greene, £2; R. McLeod, 5s; F. Renouf, 5s; D.M., 6s; P. N. Brinson, 10s; J. A. Purton, 7s 6d.

Other contributions include: E.B., Ingham, 2s; R. E. Selway, 3s; L.B. (S. Africa), £1; P. Evans, 8s; V.G. (India), £1; K.P.D. (U.S.A.), 5s; S. W. Conning, 8s; A. Borsdorf, 8s; A. Hacking, 3s; M. R. Smith, 2s; J. Porter, 8s; B. Brian, 8s; D. Hutchins, 2s; R. F. Ashbolt, 8s; R. F. Thomas, 8s; J. Smith, 4s; A. W. Lewis, 2s; N.B. (S. Africa), 5s; C.W.S. (N. Zealand), 7s; S.D., Bristol, 8s; D. H. Calcutt, 8s; J. Gray, 8s; F. W. B. Charles, 8s; A. S. Walker, 3s; J. A. Rae, 10s; T. Abbott, 4s; E. E. H. Forbes, 1s 6d; N. MacDonald, £1; Anon., 8s; R.W.H., 7s; D.H.S. (S. Africa), 3s; P.M.B. (U.S.A.), £1 18s.

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